Frequently Asked Questions about the
Genesis Mission: Transforming Science and Energy with AI
Notice of Request for Application (RFA): DE-FOA-0003612

This FAQ document will be updated as new questions are submitted to GenesisMissionNOFO@science.doe.gov. Last updated on 3/17/2026.

Getting Help

Q. I have a question that isn't answered in the RFA or this FAQ document. Whom do I contact?
A. Send your question to GenesisMissionNOFO@science.doe.gov.

Q. How can I get help with PAMS?
A. For help with PAMS, click the "PAMS Help" link on the PAMS website, https://pamspublic.science.energy.gov/. Help is also available through the question mark ("?") icon at the bottom of every page. You may also contact the PAMS Help Desk, which can be reached Monday through Friday, 9AM – 5:30 PM Eastern Time. Telephone: (855) 818-1846 (toll free) or (301) 903-9610, Email: sc.pamshelpdesk@science.doe.gov.

Q. How can I get help with Grants.gov?
A. Contact 800-518-4726 (toll-free) or support@Grants.gov. Also see Section IX of this NOFO for detailed instructions.

Phase I and II Awards

Q. What is a Phase I project?
A. Phase I projects will design and demonstrate a clear, tangible research workflow that incorporates AI with concrete evaluation of the potential for AI advantage. Projects are from $500K - $750K for 9 months. At 6 months, there will be a go/no go decision to determine if the project is eligible to advance to Phase II. Phase I projects may request up to a 3-month extension to the go/no go review date to complete planned tasks, such as experiments.

Q. What are the goals of a Phase I project?
A. Phase I projects are expected to provide a quantitative assessment of whether the proposed approach to demonstrating AI advantage in the scientific and/or technical research workflow is on a trajectory to yield a transformative scientific capability or transformative approach to an energy application, thereby justifying consideration for increased investment through a Phase II project.

Q. What is a Phase II project?
A. Phase II projects will be conducted by large teams pursuing promising directions identified in the Phase I projects. If a team believes they have already achieved the goals of Phase I projects, they may apply directly for a Phase II project in FY26. Projects are approximately 3 to 5 times the level of

effort of Phase I projects per year for three years. Unlike Phase I projects, Phase II projects that follow a phase I award in future fiscal years may include multiple Phase I teams, remove Phase I team members, add external researchers, and/or address additional focus areas provided in the RFA.

Q. How much funding is available?
A. DOE anticipates a total of $293.76 million in prior and current fiscal year funds are available to support awards under this RFA.

Q. What is the expected distribution of Phase I vs Phase II projects?
A. It is anticipated that most FY 2026 awards will be Phase I projects.

Q. How many Phase I projects are expected to transition to Phase II projects in FY 2027?
A. Only a small fraction of Phase I teams will be selected for Phase II awards. The larger Phase II projects may include multiple Phase I teams, removal of Phase I team members, or additional external researchers.

Q. What happens to Phase I projects that don't pass the go/no-go decision?
A. Phase I projects not selected for a Phase II award will end.

Q. Can institutions apply for both Phase I and Phase II awards using this RFA?
A. Yes. However, the institution may only submit one Phase I OR one Phase II application as the lead institution per focus area, not both.

Q. What topics and focus areas are included in this RFA?
A. The challenge topics are a subset of the [Genesis Mission National Science and Technology Challenges](#) (Topics 1-17) and cross-cutting needs of the Genesis Mission (Topics 18-21). DOE program offices have specific focus areas under each of the topics above.

Q. Do you expect to issue another Genesis Mission: Transforming Science and Energy with AI funding opportunity in FY 2027?
A. Yes. In FY 2027, DOE plans to amend the RFA or to issue an alternative funding opportunity to update the topics and focus areas to allow a second competition of Phase I small team applications and Phase II large team applications.

Q. What happens if I miss the application or LOI deadlines?
A. The RFA will remain open. Additional applications for Phase I and Phase II applications may be submitted after the corresponding deadline listed on the cover of the RFA. However, DOE reserves the right to decline such applications without review. If a Phase II LOI is not submitted by the deadline, DOE may hold any subsequent Phase II application until FY 2027.

Q. When are Phase I applications due?
A. April 28, 2026 at 11:59 PM ET in Grants.gov.

Q. When are Phase II Letters of Intent (LOI) due?
A. April 28, 2026 at 5:00 PM ET in PAMS.

Q. When are Phase II applications due?
A. May 19, 2026 at 11:59 PM ET in Grants.gov.

Q. What award budget period should Phase I applications use?
A. Applicants for Phase I awards should prepare budgets with a single period that starts on July 1, 2026, and ends on March 31, 2027.

Q. Are there cost share requirements for funded awards?
A. Unless otherwise specified, cost share is not required for basic and applied R&D under this RFA except for-profit entities. For-profit entities, whether prime recipients or sub-recipients, are required to provide not less than 20% cost share for basic and applied R&D, and not less than 50% of total project costs for demonstration and commercial application tasks. Applicants should review the focus area aligned with their proposal for any additional cost share requirements.

Q. Are companies allowed to request funding under this RFA?
A. Yes. It is envisioned that DOE funding for all industrial partners combined could be up to 20% of the total requested budget for specific project-relevant research efforts.

Eligibility

Q. What types of institutions are eligible to submit an application as the lead institution?
A. U.S. universities, DOE/NNSA National Laboratories, for-profit institutions, and not-for-profit institutions are eligible to serve as lead institutions. Non-DOE/NNSA Federally Funded Research and Development Centers, Other Federal Agencies, and international entities may submit applications as a member of a team but may not be the lead institution. Note that not-for-profit institutions described in section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 985 that engaged in lobbying activities after December 31, 1995 are not eligible.

Q. Does an eligible individual submitting an application as the PI or in another role need to be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
A. No, DOE does not require that individuals submitting an application as the PI or listed in the application in another role be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident. However, all personnel working or proposed to work under an award must have the legal right to perform such work in the jurisdiction where the work will be performed.

Q. Are there limitations on eligibility based on career stage of the applicant?
A. No, eligible individuals from any career stage may be proposed as a PI as long as they have the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed research.

Q. Are there limitations on the number of applications a PI can submit?
A. Yes. A PI can be the lead-PI on only one Phase I or Phase II application. However, they may be a senior investigator on an unlimited number of other applications.

Q. Are there limitations on the type of position a lead PI must be in to apply?
A. Yes. PIs must be in a permanent or indefinitely extensible position at the lead institution, whether part-time or full time.

Q. If a PI has a joint appointment, can they apply as the lead PI from either institution?
A. PIs on joint appointments can be the PI on an institution's application if they are paid by the institution and the work will be done there. However, PIs with joint appointments at DOE/NNSA national labs and another institution can only be the lead PI at the institution that pays for more than half their salary and benefits.

Q. Are there limitations on the number of applications a senior investigator can participate in as a member but not the lead PI?
A. No, senior investigators can participate in an unlimited number of Phase I or Phase II applications.

Q. Can a joint appointee whose salary and benefits are paid by the university (with nine months reimbursed by the national lab) serve as the lead PI from the university side?
A. No. As the RFA states, "Individuals receiving more than half of their salary and benefits from a DOE/NNSA National Laboratory may not be named as the PI in an application submitted by an applicant other than a DOE/NNSA National Laboratory, regardless of any arrangement between the employing Laboratory and the applicant institution." Since the majority of their salary and benefits come from the lab, they can only be a Director on the lab application.

Q. Can I serve as the lead PI if I have never been funded by DOE before?
A. Yes, anyone who meets the requirements of a lead PI may apply. See section "LIMITATIONS ON PI" in the RFA for a full list of requirements.

Q. Are there limitations on the number of applications an institution can submit as the lead?
A. Yes, an institution may only submit one Phase I or Phase II application per focus area.

Q. Are there limitations on the number of applications an institution can submit as a partner?
A. No, an institution may be a partner on an unlimited number of applications.

Q. Are different campuses in a state university system considered separate institutions for this solicitation?
A. In general, yes. Any institution that has registered with SAM and obtained a different Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) is considered a separate institution.

Q. Can an applicant select more than one focus area?
A. Each applicant must address a topic and focus area specified in the RFA. Phase I applications are limited to a single focus area. Phase II applications must identify a primary focus area but can also address secondary focus areas. The primary focus area will be used for determining limitations on institutional submissions.

Q. Can a seed team funded as a pilot under the DOE's Transformational AI Models Consortium apply for a Phase I or Phase II award?
A. Yes.

Q. Can a foreign institution be included as a member of a funded team?
A. Yes, a foreign institution may submit a collaborative application as a member of a team but may not be the lead institution. Applicants are advised that successful applications that propose non-domestic entities as subrecipients include a detailed demonstration of how the proposed non-

domestic subrecipients possess skills, resources, and abilities that do not exist among potential domestic subrecipients.

Teaming Requirements

Q. Are there restrictions on teaming for Phase I?
A. Yes. Applicants for phase I proposals must include partner institutions from at least two of the categories listed in the solicitation: (1) DOE/NNSA National Laboratories or Scientific User Facilities, (2) Industry, and (3) Institutions of Higher Education/Non-profits/other.

Q. Are there restrictions on teaming for Phase II?
A. Phase II applicants must propose larger teams and include at least one partner from categories (1) and (2). The inclusion of a lead or partner institution from category (3) is strongly encouraged but not required.

Q. Do all partners on a proposal need to be funded by DOE?
A. No. Unfunded partners are eligible to be members of a Phase I or Phase II team. However, to meet partnering requirements described in the RFA, an unfunded partner must provide intellectual contributions to the proposed project that are defined in the proposal.

Q. Do I need to be a member of the Genesis Mission Consortium to be eligible for a Phase I or Phase II award?
A. No. Participating institutions do not need to be members of the Genesis Mission Consortium to be eligible for consideration of a Phase I or Phase II award as a lead or partner. However, members of the Consortium are eligible to submit applications or be partners in submitted applications.

Q. What is the Genesis Mission Consortium's partnership service?
A. The Genesis Mission Consortium's partnership service is intended to help members and non-members of the Consortium collaborate for applications related to the DOE Genesis Mission, including this RFA. The Service will help identify high-value partnerships between applicants and consortium members to catalyze data flows and promote novel data applications.

Q. How do I access the partnership service offered by the Genesis Mission Consortium?
A. Applicants interested in leveraging the partnership service can do so by contacting the Genesis Mission Consortium. More information on the partnership service can be found on the Consortium website (https://genesismissionconsortium.org/).

Q. Are applicants required to utilize the Genesis Mission Consortium partnership services when establishing a teaming arrangement for their proposal?
A. No, utilization of the Genesis Mission Consortium partnership service is encouraged, but not required, for team formation.

Application Process

Q. Can I use AI when preparing my application?
The use of AI for preparing applications is discussed on page 68 of the RFA. DOE will apply a "fair-use" concept regarding the use of generative AI to support investigators' efforts in presenting their intellectual work in an application. Guided by the principles expressed by others (https://www.acm.org/publications/policies/frequently-asked-questions and https://journals.ieeeauthorcenter.ieee.org/become-an-ieee-journal-author/publishing-ethics/guidelines-and-policies/submission-and-peer-review-policies/#ai-generated-text), applicants must disclose the use of any AI tools in applications, unless the tools were used solely for editing an original draft. Submission of a Project Narrative that is not the work of the proposed researchers, including machine-generated Project Narratives, may constitute academic dishonesty or research misconduct.

Q. Where can I find the Collaborator Template form?
A. The Collaborator Template is available at https://science.osti.gov/grants/Policy-and-Guidance/Agreement-Forms.

Q. After preparing the required Collaborator table using the Collaborator Template from https://science.osti.gov/grants/Policy-and-Guidance/Agreement-Forms satisfy the requirement to provide a "List of Individuals Who Should Not Serve as Reviewers", should the file remain as an Excel doc or be converted to a pdf file for final submission in PAMS?
A. The instructions "10. How to Prepare a List of Individuals Who Should Not Serve as Reviewers" begin on Page 102. As noted on those pages, the Collaborator Template available at https://science.osti.gov/grants/Policy-and-Guidance/Agreement-Forms may be used for your convenience. The file should remain as an Excel doc.

Q. Should the "List of Individuals Who Should Not Serve as Reviewers" (i.e., Collaborators table) be separate files and/or tabs for each senior personnel and/or institution?
A. The collaborator spreadsheets from all participating key personnel and partner institutions should be consolidated into a single file with two tabs ("Senior-Key Personnel" and "Collaborators") for submission. The file should remain as an excel doc.

Q. What mechanisms are used by this RFA to support teams of multiple institutions and are applicants required to use a specific mechanism?
A. There are two different mechanisms used by this RFA to support teams of multiple institutions: collaborative applications wherein each member of the team submits an application, and subawards, wherein all other team members are proposed as subrecipients of the lead institution. Applicants are not required to use one or the other mechanism, but DOE strongly encourages the use of collaborative applications.

Q. Is a data management and sharing plan required for this application?
A. Yes. The requirements for the data management and sharing plan (DMSP) are different for phase I and phase II proposals. For a phase I proposal, the DMSP will be required at the time of the award. For a phase II proposal, the DMSP will be required at the time of the application. For guidance on the requirements of the DMSP, please refer to the RFA.

Q. Is a letter of commitment required from participating team members?
A. Yes, a letter of commitment, signed by a person authorized to commit the participating institution to a legally binding agreement, is required from each institution participating as a team member on the proposal. Please refer to the RFA for submission requirements.